The APRM Second Continental Training on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to Accelerate Implementation of Agenda 2063 and SDGs

Key Findings and Recommendations

REPORT

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Foreword

Ambassador Marie-Antoinette Rose Quatre

CEO, APRM Continental Secretariat

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), UN World Food Programme (WFP), International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation, and Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI), successfully concluded its second continental capacity-building programme on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC).

This programme, developed by the APRM Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate, aimed to raise awareness of SSTrC in Africa and the global South to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The training was held from 6 March to 10 June 2024. It brought together 286 participants from 41 countries including India and Brazil. This diverse group of participants engaged in an intensive four-week programme to deepen their understanding of SSTrC's pivotal role in implementing Agenda 2063 and 2030, as well as current global and continental geopolitical transformations across the global South.

Participants gained insights into the history of SSTrC and its critical importance for Africa's development, explored horizontal partnerships within South-South Cooperation, and delved into aligning SSTrC with development programmes. They were also familiarized with monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the impact of SSTrC in Africa, enhancing their ability to measure its effectiveness for resilient and sustainable communities.

The programme provided access to the APRM's Knowledge Hub platform, where participants engaged with knowledge materials and interacted through public guest lectures with renowned experts.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to H.E. Ambassador Amr Aljowaily, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt and former Advisor to the Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Willy Mugenzi (Republic of Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. Dageng LIU and Luara Lopes (World Food Programme), Mr. Adamou Mayaki and Mr. Sameh Hussein (IsDB), and Dr. Denis Nkala (United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation – UNSSC) for their invaluable contributions and insightful presentations.

The success of the programme underscores the commitment of African countries and their partners to utilize SSTrC for regional and global development, aligning with the AU-UN framework for Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This training fulfils the decision of the 28th AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government to expand the Mechanism's mandate to support African countries in monitoring the implementation of Agenda 2063 and SDGs, thus aligning with the AU-UN framework for the implementation of these agendas.

The training curricula was initially developed by the APRM Continental Secretariat and the Institute for Global Dialogue (UNISA) with the support of the GIZ office at the African Union. I express my gratitude to the APRM team, Ms. Sara Hamouda and Ms. Bernadette Yiga (Agenda 2063 Continental Governance Programme), who dedicated time and efforts to update the curricula under the overall supervision of Mr. Jean Yves Adou, Acting Director of Monitoring and Evaluation. I would like also to thank Mr. Loot Janse van Rensburg, Knowledge Hub Focal Point, Mr. Abu Bakr Siddig (ICT Unit), and Mr. Lennon Monyae, Youth Focal Point, for their support during the programme implementation.

I hope you find the key highlights and recommendations from this training valuable in deepening your understanding of the role of Triangular and South-South Cooperation in advancing sustainable development in Africa.

H.E. Amb. Marie-Antoinette Rose Quatre
Chief Executive Officer
APRM Continental Secretariat

Objectives of the Training

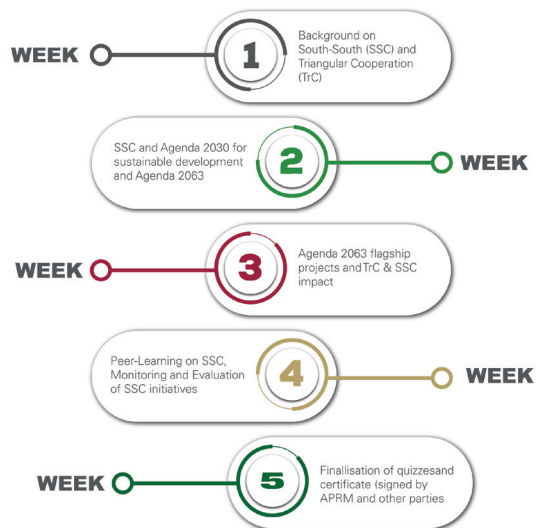The APRM Continental Capacity Building Training aimed to:

- Promote in-depth knowledge of the history of SSTrC and its significance to Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063: ''The Africa We Want''
- Raise awareness of horizontal partnerships and the ecosystem of SSC led by the Islamic Development Bank, UN agencies and other partners.
- Display the role of SSTrC in implementing development programmes in pursuit of Agenda 2063 and its flagship programmes, as well as new regional blocs including BRICS.
- Familiarize participants with available monitoring and evaluation systems/ frameworks to assess SSTrC in Africa.

Table 1: Statistics depicting Country of participants.

Benefited countries from the APRM SSTrC Training
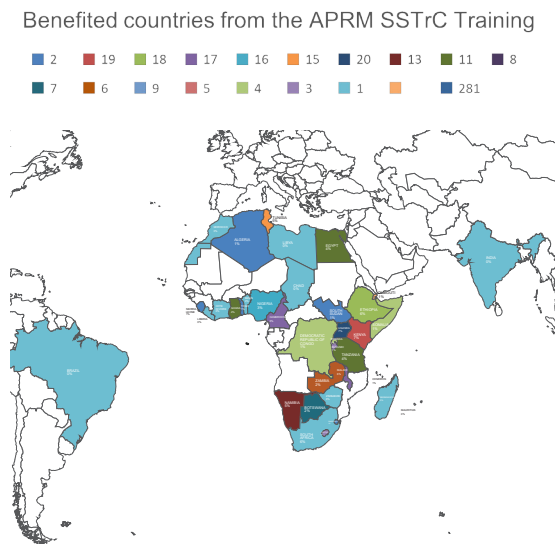
Modality of the Training and Thematic focus

Officials from the APRM provided an overview of the APRM's involvement in SSTrC programmes since 2018. They highlighted the APRM as a unique mechanism fostering collaboration within the Global South, emphasizing principles of solidarity, knowledge sharing, and peer learning among African countries and other Southern partners. The four-week training programme included thematic modules covering various pertinent topics.

WEEK 1 — Background on South-South (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation (TrC)

WEEK 2 — SSC and Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and Agenda 2063

WEEK 3 — Agenda 2063 flagship projects and TrC & SSC impact

WEEK 4 — Peer-Learning on SSC, Monitoring and Evaluation of SSC initiatives

WEEK 5 — Finallisation of quizzesand certificate (signed by APRM and other parties)

The training is provided through free access to the APRM Knowledge Hub platform. It is delivered through knowledge materials, presentations, background documents, and weekly guest lectures. This approach will assist practitioners and participants in delving into the history and current development of SSTrC from theoretical and empirical perspectives.

Virtual Platform

Study tour for member states

Materials, presentations and public guest speaker lectures, Quizzes
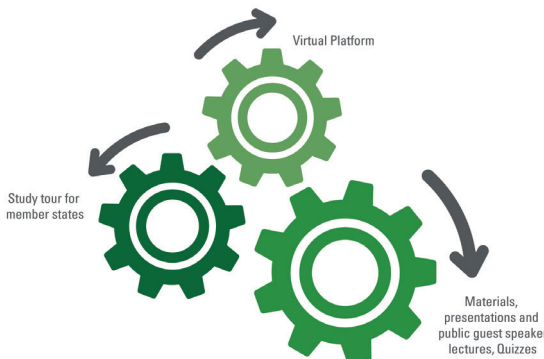
KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MODULES OF THE SSTRC TRAINING

MODULE I. SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSTRC)

South-South cooperation is a collaborative effort among developing countries in the Global South to promote economic, social, and political development. It emerged in the 1950s and gained prominence in the 1970s as developing nations sought to enhance mutual support and exchange knowledge and resources. Key principles of South-South cooperation include solidarity, equality, mutual benefit, and non-interference in domestic affairs.

Triangular Cooperation involves collaboration between a developing country, a developed country, and usually an international organization or institution. This form of cooperation leverages the strengths and resources of both developed and developing nations to address development challenges and promote sustainable development.

The nexus between South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is rooted in their shared objectives of promoting good governance, fostering sustainable development, and international cooperation.

Both initiatives aim to enhance the capacity of nations to address common challenges through collaborative efforts, knowledge sharing, and the implementation of best practices.

Africa and BRICS: A Strategic Partnership

1. **Economic Cooperation:** Africa's trade with the BRICS countries has increased significantly over the past decade. The BRICS countries are key trading partners for many African nations, representing both markets for African exports and sources of imports.

   The BRICS countries, particularly China, have been heavily involved in infrastructure projects across Africa, including roads, railways, ports, and energy projects. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a notable example of this engagement.

2. **Political and Diplomatic Engagement:** BRICS countries often advocate reforms and greater representation for developing countries at international forums such as the United Nations.

   Both Africa and BRICS countries share the goal of promoting multipolarity, economic development, and addressing global challenges such as poverty and inequality.

3. **Development Assistance and Knowledge Sharing:** Technical cooperation, capacity building, and financial aid are all forms of development assistance provided by BRICS countries to African countries.

   The BRICS and and African countries are strongly committed to sharing development experiences and best practices. Among these areas are governance, healthcare, education, and technology.

BRICS and SSTrC

The relationship between Africa and BRICS is based on the principles of SSC, which emphasize mutual benefit, solidarity, and equality. This is evident in the various development projects and initiatives that prioritize the needs and priorities of African countries.

The BRICS countries have established numerous training programmes for African professionals, including exchange programmes. As part of SSC, these programmes aim to build local capacities in various sectors, including agriculture, health, and education.

The New Development Bank (NDB), established by BRICS, provides financing for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in developing countries, including those in Africa.

The regular BRICS summits and forums facilitate dialogue and cooperation on a wide range of topics, including those relevant to Africa. As a result of these gatherings, ideas, experiences, and best practices are exchanged.

Figure 1: Objectives of BRICS

1. Economic Cooperation	Promote trade, investment, and technological exchange among member countries.	Foster economic growth and development through collaborative economic initiatives.
2. Political Cooperation	Enhance political cooperation & advocate for inclusive world order.	Collaborate on political and security matters to address common challenges
3. Addressing Global Challenges	Focus on global challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and public health.	Work together to find sustainable solutions for shared challenges

Relevance to Agenda 2063 and SDGs

1. **Economic Growth and Infrastructure Development:** BRICS countries' infrastructure investments in Africa contribute to Agenda 2063's goals, especially those relateing to economic integration, industrialization, and infrastructure development. These efforts support SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

2. **Human Development and Capacity Building:** The capacity-building initiatives align with Agenda 2063's goals of human capital development and improved governance. These initiatives support SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

3. **Resilience and Sustainability:** The focus on sustainable development and resilience-building through BRICS-Africa cooperation contributes to Agenda 2063's vision of a prosperous and sustainable Africa. These efforts are aligned with SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

The relationship between Africa and BRICS is a dynamic example of South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Through economic cooperation, political engagement, and development assistance, BRICS countries are playing a significant role in supporting Africa's development goals as outlined in Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

The principles of SSC and TrC underpin this partnership, emphasizing mutual benefit, solidarity, and shared development. By leveraging these relationships, Africa can advance its developmental agenda, enhance its global standing, and achieve sustainable and inclusive growth.

Key points on shared interests and interconnectedness:

o South-South cooperation emphasizes the **exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices among developing countries.** Through APRM, countries undergo peer reviews and share experiences on governance practices, policy reforms, and development strategies. This knowledge exchange contributes to learning and capacity-building across participating nations.

o Triangular cooperation often involves the **mobilization of resources and expertise** from developed countries or international organizations to support development projects in developing countries. APRM assessments may identify areas where external support is needed, and triangular cooperation can facilitate the mobilization of resources to address those needs, such as technical assistance, funding, or capacity-building initiatives.

o South-South and triangular cooperation **aim to align policies and strategies with development goals.** APRM assessments help countries identify policy gaps and areas for improvement in governance and development. Cooperation initiatives can then focus on supporting countries in aligning their policies with international standards and best practices.

o South-South and triangular cooperation can **enhance regional integration efforts,** including economic cooperation, infrastructure development, and trade facilitation. APRM assessments often consider regional dynamics and cooperation frameworks, and collaborative initiatives can strengthen regional institutions and promote cross-border cooperation.

• South-South and triangular cooperation complement the goals of the APRM by fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, resource mobilization, and policy alignment among African countries and their partners. These cooperative frameworks contribute to advancing good governance, sustainable development, and regional integration in Africa and beyond.

Figure 2: The African Union Engagement in a Multi-lateral World
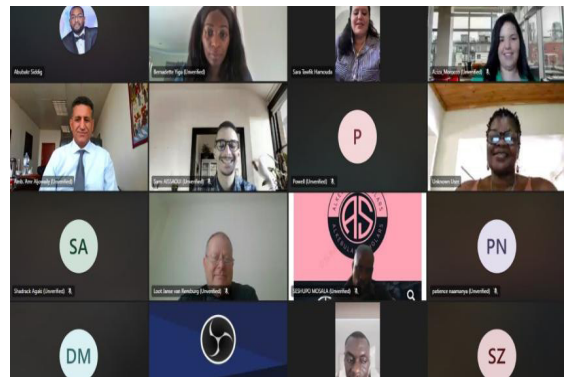
Lecture I: Amb. Amr Aljowaily, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs (Egypt) and former Advisor to Deputy Chairperson - African union Commission

Module I: Background on South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The module explores the historical and contemporary developments of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC and TrC) in a transitional political order. It examines the concept of the "Global South," emerging after World War II, emphasizing the shared historical and contemporary challenges faced by these countries. The module traces the evolution of SSC, starting from the Asian Relations Conference in 1947 to the Bandung Conference in 1955. These events led to the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77. It also highlights significant milestones such as the establishment of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) in 1978. Furthermore, it discusses the rise of TrC, partnerships among developing countries, and the current dynamics in international development cooperation.

Ambassador Amr Aljowaily provided an insightful overview of the historical evolution and contemporary significance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC and TrC). He emphasized the origins of SSC, noting its roots in post-World War II politics and the formation of key alliances such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77. He highlighted major milestones, including the establishment of the UNOSSC and the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which laid the groundwork for technical cooperation among developing countries. Aljowaily also underscored the impact of significant events such as the 2009 Nairobi Conference and the 2019 BAPA+40 Conference, which reinforced the importance of SSC and TrC in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063.

Aljowaily's presentation also addressed the growing importance of SSC in contemporary global politics, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. He stressed the need for improved resilience and preparedness among African countries, highlighting the role of the APRM in promoting SSC dialogues and institutionalizing initiatives. Key recommendations included enhancing peer-learning, boosting economic resilience, and fostering private sector engagement. He also pointed to the strategic importance of frameworks such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in promoting intra-African trade and cooperation.

In conclusion, Aljowaily's talk provided a comprehensive overview of the historical context, key milestones, and current relevance of SSC and TrC. He highlighted the transformative potential of these cooperation modalities in addressing global challenges, fostering economic growth, and promoting sustainable development. His recommendations for *enhancing institutional capacities, leveraging regional frameworks, and engaging non-state actors underscored the critical role of SSC and TrC in achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs*.

MODULE II: SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION INITIATIVES TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)/AGENDA 2063

This module delves into explores the crucial role of South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063. It explores the historical context, significance, and real-world examples of SSC initiatives led by various African and UN agencies. Additionally, it examines the evolving landscape of multilateralism and the involvement of global structures like BRICS+ and G20 in promoting development cooperation.

Southern institutional mechanisms are pivotal in fostering sustainable development through South-South and Triangular Cooperation. These mechanisms facilitate the sharing of knowledge, best practice, and resources among developing countries, addressing common challenges and advancing shared goals. A prime example of such a mechanism is the Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI).

The Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI) was established to promote sustainable development through SSC. It leverages Rwanda's development experiences, expertise, and best practices to support other developing countries in achieving their development objectives. The RCI focuses on sectors such as governance, healthcare, agriculture, education, and ICT.

The Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI) exemplifies the significant role southern institutional mechanisms can play in advancing sustainable development through SSC and TrC. By leveraging Rwanda's development successes and fostering partnerships, the RCI contributes to the realization of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, enhancing the collective capacity of developing countries to address global challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Lecture II: Rwanda Cooperation initiative (RCI) – Delivered by Dr. Willy Mugenzi, Chief Operations Officer of Rwanda Cooperation Initiative

Key Messages:

a. RCI promotes home-grown initiatives and good practices through SSC and Triangular Cooperation, emphasizing the 5Ps: People, Peace, Planet, Partnership, Prosperity.

b. RCI facilitates study visits, training programmes, advisory services, and project implementation. Over 4,000 people from 62 countries have undertaken study visits to Rwanda since 2022, focusing on areas like gender equality, peacebuilding, and corruption control.

c. RCI's approach is client-centric, aligning study visit interests with institutions and continuously generating feedback for improvements. Programmes are trainee-centered, blending classroom learning with field visits.

d. RCI provides strategic policy reviews, tailored advisories, and systems appraisals to state and non-state actors involved in post-conflict transformation processes under SSC.

Some key Examples of the above are:

o   Training on Human Trafficking and Anti-Terrorism

o   Health and Nursing Services

Significance of SSC in Achieving SDGs:

1. Eradicating Poverty and Inequality:

1. SSC initiatives contribute to achieving SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by fostering economic growth and development cooperation among developing countries.

2. Building Resilient Institutions:

1. SSC supports SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by strengthening governance and institutional capacities in developing countries.

3. Promoting Sustainable Development:

1. Aligns with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development through SSC.

Dr. Willy Mugenzi emphasized the critical role of co-creation, co-investment, and strategic partnerships in overcoming global challenges and accelerating progress towards the SDGs. The session underscored the transformative potential of South-South Cooperation (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation in driving sustainable development and empowering the Global South on the global stage.

MODULE III: ROLE OF AFRICA'S STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN REALIZING AGENDA 2063 FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

This module examines the crucial role of Africa's strategic partners in realizing the flagship projects outlined in Agenda 2063. It explores the purpose and progress of these projects, the significance of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and triangular cooperation and highlights key partnerships with international actors such as China, the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and the African Development Bank (AfDB). The module also analyzes how these partnerships contribute to the overall goals of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Impact on Agenda 2063 and SDGs

Economic Integration and Infrastructure Development:

The projects and partnerships are pivotal in bolstering economic integration and infrastructure development, both of which are central to Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

Initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the development of high-speed train networks aim to stimulate intra-African trade and connectivity. These efforts directly contribute to SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:

Programmes focused on capacity building and knowledge sharing, such as those offered by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), are instrumental in achieving the human development goals of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. These programmes directly contribute to SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

Resilience and Sustainable Development:

The emphasis on building resilience, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, aligns with the broader goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication, as outlined in SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being).

By leveraging these strategic partnerships, Africa can advance its flagship projects under Agenda 2063, thereby accelerating progress towards the SDGs and fostering sustainable and inclusive development across the continent.

Lecture Module III: Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTrC) - Mr. Sameh Hussein

The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), headquartered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, is a multilateral development bank established in 1975 to foster social and economic development across its 57 member countries. **IsDB is the only Multilateral Development Bank whose shareholders and beneficiaries are all from the Global South**. With regional hubs in Morocco, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Uganda, and Suriname, the IsDB operates through a decentralized structure.

IsDB's Workstreams for Promoting SSTrC:

1. **Capacity Development**: The IsDB assists member countries in addressing their capacity development needs through the IsDB Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). In 1983, the TCP was established to facilitate the transfer and exchange of skills and knowledge between member countries to improve human capital.

2. **Reverse Linkage:** Through "Reverse Linkage" projects, the IsDB enables member countries to exchange proven solutions for their developmental challenges. In this mechanism, countries learn and collaborate from each other, ensuring equal benefits for all participants.

3. **Building National Ecosystems for SSTrC:** As part of its support for SSTrC, the Bank helps member countries develop their national ecosystems. In order to achieve this, interconnected institutional arrangements must be developed that complement each other and provide a conducive environment for effective SSTrC. Integrating SSTrC into national development agendas requires political will and national strategies.

4. **Knowledge Products:** To strengthen member countries' efforts to promote SSTrC, the ISDB produces knowledge products about good practices, lessons learned, and successful experiences.

Key Features of Reverse Linkage programme:

o   Interventions align with national development priorities in recipient countries.
o   All member countries have something to contribute, regardless of their development level.
o   By exchanging knowledge, expertise, technology, and resources, all stakeholders benefit.
o   Technical, in-kind, and financial commitments are made by all parties.
o   All stakeholders' contributions are valued equally

National Ecosystem for SSTrC:
SSTrC is facilitated by a comprehensive system in which different institutional arrangements work harmoniously together. Various components are essential, including political will, a national strategy, knowledge bases, connected actors, coordination mechanisms, and performance management systems.

South-South Cooperation Index:

Using the SSC Index, countries can determine whether SSCs exist, are effective, and are increasing. It provides insights into the scale and diversity of SSC activities through nine dimensions and various qualitative indicators.

Key Points and Recommendations:

- As a facilitator, IsDB provides the necessary support and resources to help SSTrC initiatives succeed.The effectiveness of SSTrC can be maximized by integrating capacity development, reverse linkage, national ecosystems, and knowledge sharing. A strong political will and strategic alignment with national priorities are crucial for the success of SSTrC initiatives.

- Promoting peer-to-peer learning and ensuring inclusivity can enhance development efforts' effectiveness and sustainability. Robust performance management can enhance SSTrC intervention efficiency and effectiveness through lessons learned.

Takeaways:

- IsDB has been instrumental in fostering development through SSTrC initiatives.

- The Reverse Linkage mechanism enables knowledge sharing and collaboration.

- Strong national ecosystems are crucial for sustainable development cooperation.

- Continuous learning and evaluation are essential for optimizing SSTrC initiatives.

IsDB Reverse Linkage Mechanism
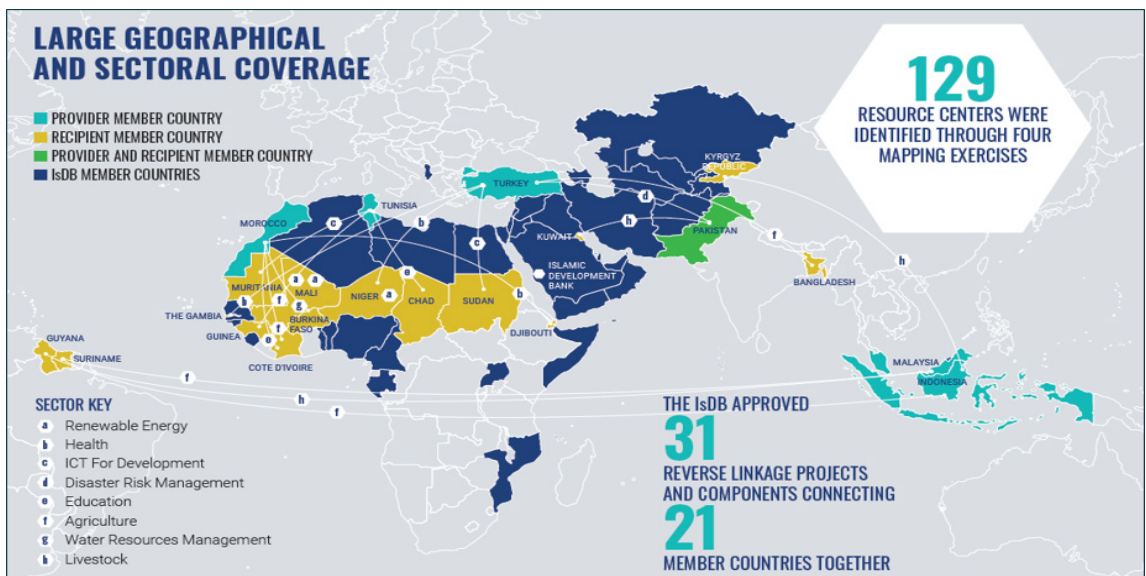
Pillars of the National Ecosystem of SSTrC

MODULE IV: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

This module, delivered by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and the World Food Programme (WFP), focuses on the mechanisms and frameworks for knowledge sharing, monitoring, and evaluation (M&E) of South-South Cooperation (SSC) initiatives. It addresses the challenges in quantifying SSC initiatives and highlights the importance for robust development cooperation management systems.

The module also explores regional and national efforts to institutionalize SSC, case studies, and the role of international frameworks like the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40).

Lecture IV: Monitoring and Evaluation of SSC Delivered by UNOSSC and WFP

Mr. Denis Nkala, (PhD), Chief, Intergovernmental and UN Systems Affairs, UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

Key Messages:

1. **Institutionalizing SSC:**

   o   Mr. Nkala highlighted efforts to institutionalize SSC through frameworks such as the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) and the First African South-South Cooperation Report. These frameworks aim to standardize data collection, reporting, and analysis of SSC activities.

   o   UNOSSC's development of online platforms like South-South Galaxy, which consolidates SSC solutions and acts as a one-stop-shop for partners, was emphasized as a critical tool for knowledge sharing and partnership brokering.

2. **Regional and National Efforts:**

   o   Mr. Nkala discussed national efforts to institutionalize SSC, with case studies from countries like China, India, Brazil, and Rwanda. These countries have established dedicated agencies to manage and coordinate SSC activities, contributing to more effective and structured cooperation.

   o   The Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI) was highlighted as an innovative example of a country-driven SSC mechanism. Rwanda's approach to leveraging home-grown solutions and its strategic orientation towards ownership and tailor-made solutions were noted as key factors in its success.

   o   Capacity Building for M&E: Strengthening the capacity of SSC stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation is critical. Mr. Nkala advocated for training and resources to build the skills necessary for effective M&E, ensuring that all parties involved can contribute to and benefit from the evaluation process.

3. **BAPA+40 and SSC Frameworks:**

   o   The BAPA+40 outcome document provides important principles and guidelines for SSC, emphasizing national ownership, mutual benefit, and respect for national sovereignty. Mr. Nkala stressed the need for developing countries to adopt and strengthen national policies to advance SSC and Triangular Cooperation (TrC).

   o   The document encourages the establishment of methodologies for planning, monitoring, and evaluating SSC activities, which are crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of SSC initiatives.

   o   These methodologies can help measure the success of SSC initiatives against the established goals and to identify areas for improvement.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation of SSC:

o Establishing M&E Frameworks: Mr. Nkala emphasized the importance of integrating robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks into SSC initiatives. This involves setting clear objectives, indicators, and targets for SSC activities to track progress and assess impact.

o Data Collection and Analysis: Systematic data collection and analysis are vital for understanding the outcomes and effectiveness of SSC projects. Mr. Nkala recommended using standardized tools and methodologies to ensure consistency and comparability across different projects and regions.

o Feedback and Learning: M&E processes should include mechanisms for feedback and continuous learning. Insights gained from monitoring should inform future SSC initiatives, allowing for adaptive management and improved performance.

o Reporting and Accountability: Transparent reporting on the results of SSC activities is essential for accountability to stakeholders. Regular evaluations should be conducted to measure the success of SSC initiatives against the established goals and to identify areas for improvement.

o Capacity Building for M&E: Strengthening the capacity of SSC stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation is critical. Mr. Nkala advocated for training and resources to build the skills necessary for effective M&E, ensuring that all parties involved can contribute to and benefit from the evaluation process.

Impact on Agenda 2063 and SDGs

- The initiatives discussed by Lopes and Nkala directly contribute to strengthening institutional capacities in SSC, aligning with Agenda 2063's aspiration for a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development. This also supports SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) by enhancing cooperation and knowledge sharing.

- WFP's focus on food security and resilience through SSC initiatives addresses SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and aligns with Agenda 2063's goals of ensuring food security and sustainable agriculture.

- The promotion of innovative solutions and knowledge exchange platforms like South-South Galaxy and WFP's virtual collaboration tools contribute to achieving SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by fostering sustainable development and effective governance.

By leveraging SSC and TrC, Africa can advance its development goals under Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The insights from the guest speakers, Ms. Luara Lopes and Mr. Denis Nkala, underscore the importance of robust M&E frameworks, capacity building, and resilient food systems. These elements are crucial for ensuring the effectiveness and impact of SSC initiatives, ultimately contributing to sustainable and inclusive development across the continent.

CONCLUSION AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The SSTRC Training Programme extensively covered the nuances of South- South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), with a particular emphasis on strategic partnerships, sustainable development goals (SDGs), and Africa's role in realizing Agenda 2063. Key discussions revolved around the African Union's global engagement, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks, and the fundamental principles guiding SSTC.

A significant focus was placed on the role of strategic partners in realizing Agenda 2063's flagship projects. Discussions explored how alliances with global entities can support Africa's development goals, while acknowledging the complexity of managing multiple integration efforts, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), alongside SSTC initiatives. Noteworthy initiatives included the establishment of a forum of institutional cooperation between the AU and BRICS, highlighting a strategic alignment with global players like the G20, UN Security Council, EU, China, and the US.

Global engagement and strategic positioning are central to the AU's role in global forums. The discussions acknowledged the challenges posed by intra-African conflicts and historical under-representation in global governance structures, but also recognized Africa's potential to address these issues proactively and enhance its influence in global decision-making.

Fundamental principles of South-South and Triangular Cooperation, such as national ownership, equality, non-conditionality, and mutual benefit, were reiterated as critical to the success of SSTC initiatives. These principles set SSTC apart from traditional development cooperation, emphasizing the importance of country-led and demand-driven projects.

The significance of robust monitoring and evaluation systems and frameworks was a recurring theme. Effective M&E frameworks are essential for tracking progress, ensuring accountability, and documenting successes and failures. Challenges such as insufficient data, limited resources, and the complexity of multi-stakeholder evaluations were discussed, alongside the need for innovation and adaptability in M&E practices.

The programme stressed the importance of sharing innovative solutions and best practices to enhance development outcomes. Efforts to develop comprehensive handbooks and integrate SSTC perspectives in UN evaluations were seen as steps toward improved measurability and accountability.

Ensuring accountability through peer review mechanisms and multiple levels of accountability was highlighted. The discussions underscored the need for external evaluation mechanisms to complement self-evaluation, enhancing credibility and effectiveness.

Participants acknowledged various challenges, including the lack of standardized M&E processes and political commitment issues. However, the potential for Africa to leverage SSTC to drive regional integration, productivity, and industrial development was also emphasized. Active engagement from participants highlighted the necessity for strong negotiation skills, aligning expectations, and the strategic focus on increasing domestic productivity and value addition to natural resources in Africa.

The programme concluded with several key recommendations and outcomes aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of South-South and Triangular Cooperation:

o   Reinforce the AU's strategic positioning through enhanced partnerships with global players. These partnerships should align with Agenda 2063 objectives and ensure mutual benefits and respect for recipient countries' sovereignty.

o   Standardize M&E processes to ensure consistent and effective tracking of SSTC initiatives. Tailored frameworks should incorporate both qualitative and quantitative methods, reflecting the unique principles of SSTC.

o   Ensure that SSTC projects are country-led and demand-driven, promoting national ownership and equitable partnerships. This approach will align development efforts with local needs and priorities.

o   Address challenges in data availability and political commitment to support effective M&E. Strengthen capacities dedicated to monitoring efforts and foster continuous innovation and adaptation in SSTC practices.

o   Encourage the sharing of innovative solutions and best practices to address evolving challenges. Develop handbooks and integrate SSTC perspectives into UN evaluations to enhance measurability and accountability.

o   Complement self-evaluation with external evaluation mechanisms to enhance credibility and effectiveness. Utilize peer review and multiple levels of accountability to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

o   Strategize on increasing domestic productivity and value addition to natural resources in Africa. Develop measures to attract investments, foster industrialization, and promote sustainable development and employment generation.

o   By integrating these recommendations and fostering robust partnerships, comprehensive M&E frameworks, and continuous innovation, the SSTRC initiatives can significantly contribute to sustainable development and the successful realization of Agenda 2063 in Africa.

In conclusion the SSTRC Training programme effectively illuminated the intricacies and potential of South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) in advancing sustainable development and realizing Agenda 2063. Key outcomes included the recognition of the need for standardized monitoring and evaluation frameworks, the importance of qualitative impact assessment, and the reaffirmation of fundamental principles such as equality, mutual benefit, and national ownership. Deliberations underscored the pivotal role of strategic alliances, ongoing innovation, and capacity enhancement in fostering effective and sustainable development outcomes across Africa.

About the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM):

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is a unique AU initiative established in 2003. It is a voluntary acceded tool designed to foster good governance through peer assessments and learning. The APRM's core objectives include promoting democracy, strengthening institutions, ensuring political stability, and driving socioeconomic development. Guided by principles such as ownership, sovereignty, inclusivity, transparency, and sharing best practices, the APRM has become a significant mechanism for promoting good governance in Africa.

Over the years, the APRM has conducted reviews and assessments in various member states, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. This process involves extensive consultations with diverse stakeholders, including government officials, civil society organizations, the private sector, and other relevant groups, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

The APRM continues to evolve, adapting its processes and mechanisms to address the evolving governance and development needs of African countries. It remains a vital platform for promoting accountability, transparency, and good governance practices across the continent. By fostering peer learning, sharing experiences, and providing constructive feedback, the APRM contributes to the overall improvement of governance standards in Africa.

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